

SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE



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BULLETIN OF SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE



FOUNDERS' DAY NUMBER

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BULLETIN
OF
SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE

FOUNDERS' DAY EXERCISES

OCTOBER 28, 1932

SWEET BRIAR, VIRGINIA



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SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE
FOUNDERS' DAY

Friday, October 28, 1932

10.00 A. M.

Mrs. Charles R. Burnett, Member of the
Board of Overseers, Presiding

Opening Hymn 49, Ancient of Days

Jeffery

Invocation

The Rev. Thomas D. Lewis

Psalm 121

Address

DR. IRVING MAURER, President
Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin

Chorus—"Let us now praise famous men", *R. Vaughan Williams*

Choir, Glee Club and Audience

LET US NOW PRAISE FAMOUS MEN

Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us,
Such as did bear rule in their kingdom, men renowned for their power,
Leaders of the people by their counsels, and by their knowledge.
Such as found out musical tunes, and recited verses in writing:
All these were honored in their generations, and were the glory of their times.
And some there be, which have no memorial; who are perished, as though
they had never been.
Their bodies are buried in peace: but their name liveth forevermore.

Words selected from Ecclesiasticus XLIV.

Presentation of Robert L. Cumnock for the
Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award

President Glass

Conferring of the Award

Mrs. Charles R. Burnett

Founders' Day Honors

Dean Emily H. Dutton

Benediction

The Rev. Thomas D. Lewis

Sweet Briar Song

Immediately after the chapel exercises, a Medallion of Daisy Williams was unveiled in the Gymnasium, and Seniors and Sophomores took part in a service on Monument Hill to which other members of the college and visitors were cordially invited.

THE COLLEGE IN THE AMERICAN SCENE

By DR. IRVING MAURER
President of Beloit College
Beloit, Wisconsin

Although the nine years of my presidency at Beloit College have proven to me, at least, that being the president of a college can be a lot of fun, I would rather be the founder of a college than the president of one. In the first place, the founder has to face no traditions. He himself, or she herself, becomes the tradition. Procedures form themselves with a delightful immediacy, without the fear or the memory of precedents. In the second place there is no constituency to flout or to disappoint. There are no alumni, of whom our Professor Densmore says, "The trouble with alumni is, they want the college always to remain the same and they want the college to be always up to date." There is no faculty, being presented to which is the most terrible of ordeals for a newly-elected president. And there is adventure, the romance of new beginnings; everything lies in the roseate hue of a promising tomorrow. At Beloit over eighty years ago Beloit College was an unfinished building, two temporary instructors, a handful of students and a debt of ten thousand dollars. A young man in Milwaukee had to choose between the secretaryship of a national society with headquarters in New York City and the presidency of Beloit College. He simply could not do anything else but accept a challenge like that. Thinking upon these things compels within me a feeling of envy. In simple justice all colleges should die with their first president so as to give those of us who come after the glorious fun of beginning all over again.

The founders of colleges should be remembered as belonging to youth rather than to old age, for whether they were young or old in years, they had the spirit of youth in their veins. There should be a law forbidding the painting of the picture of any educator after the years lie heavy upon him. I doubt whether the average age of the first faculty of a college would be as advanced as would be the average age of its faculty

today. In the Art Museum at Beloit is the portrait of a venerable sage with full white beard—it shows Professor Joseph Emerson, cousin of Ralph Waldo, at the time of his retirement. But in the Faculty Club at Beloit there hangs upon the walls of Professor Emerson's own study the portrait of a young man just out of Yale. Though the body of Professor Emerson changed the heart of Professor Emerson, through all the years of his teaching Greek, was more truthfully portrayed in the picture of a man who was young.

Good founders have the gift of infecting the institutions which they have created with the seed of decay. Good colleges do die every once in a while, and if the founders knew of that happening they would feel that their work had been well done. The finest measure of success in any worthwhile undertaking is to confer to a later time the nucleus of a fresh beginning.

But envy at the advantages enjoyed by the founders of this and other great colleges cannot prevent my acknowledging on an occasion like this that the work which the founders did and the work done ever since by the colleges which they founded was a work well done. Most of our colleges were started with a beautiful dream, and the dream had to do with the blossoming of an American civilization, and the dream has come true.

Therefore, with these reasons for thinking of the founders joyously, of thinking of them in terms of adventurous youth engaging upon the enterprise of an enriching of what was to be a new American life, may I say something about what good colleges do in this American scene.

II

The College in the American Scene. What is the part it played or plays?

The college in America has been a force in the making of a better social order. Its function has been the discovery of new ideas. Of course college communities are themselves the creations of society and reflect in their relations and doings a contemporary morality. I would not have it any different. To be somewhat ahead of your times in your ideas and to be old-fashioned in your ways, is a wholesome way of being useful. The new ideas of which I speak are not so much original ideas as they are intellectual loyalty to sound notions

of intelligent humane relationships. If colleges are not primarily concerned with investigation with new processes of doing the world's work they are primarily concerned with the question as to what effect such new processes will have upon the good, the true and the beautiful in human life. The colleges have therefore maintained an attitude of intellectual independence with regard to new economic or social or political machinery, willing to try all things that are new but intent upon holding only to that which is good.

And this explains why, ever since the age of the machine burst upon the world, the college has concerned itself with ideas, with values, with asking "Whither are we going?" and "Are we going in the right direction?" There were times when some of the colleges nearly turned with the crowd upon intellectual by-paths. Colleges themselves became enamoured of the new but very limited pleasure of pushing buttons and of seeing the wheels go around. But they did not go very far before they discovered their mistake. And so, if you look today in America to find people who have never fully accepted the forces which have made America what she is today, superficially at least, you will find them on the campus of the American colleges and universities. The growth of corporate wealth to the point where an amazing number of American wage earners and investors are less and less the captains of their souls, the breeding of an inveterate acquisitiveness in the thought life of millions through the hope of getting rich without work, simply by guessing correctly in the market, the over urbanization of life through a foolish, shortsighted, needless congestion of population into great cities where life is cursed for the commons with a stifling anonymity, these things have always been challenged by the colleges.

And this is the case because the colleges have cherished at their heart a loyalty to the American ideals of living. There rests upon our colleges a vivid memory of the achievement of an Anglo-Saxon individualism. Our background still is the background of pioneers, their settling of a new continent, their throwing off of suppression and tyranny. The colleges still believe in the individual, their spirit is that of the anarchy which always obtains in a community of fair minded men, rather than that of a social despotism which grows upon a

lack of faith in human nature. And if you would know America as many of us know her, if you would believe in her as possessing capacities for nurturing a race of free men and women, go to her colleges. The America of which I speak has been almost forgotten by her own people. I read editorials in American papers which make me think that I am living in Italy or the Russia of the Czars. I see Americans arrogating to themselves the right to obey only those laws which appeal to themselves. I see Americans acting as if they actually believed that God had committed the keeping of thousands of human beings into their hands, but these people have either never gone to an American college or, as often happens, never worked hard enough at their studies, while there, to learn what a college education really meant; they were of the type of student of whom a dean recently spoke when he said, "The trouble with my college is that there are so many people there who do not want their studies to interfere with their education."

The colleges have also maintained a cultured awareness of the worth of the average man and woman. The colleges of America are among our finest democratic communities. Students learn to respect each other for what each can do; youth is naturally democratic and education is marked by a lack of social snobbery. If colleges are causes of concern it is probably because college men and women often break the castes and the ostracisms in society, which are the token of timid inferior minds.

It is the colleges of America which have challenged the machine age, not because the colleges fear the machine but because they wish to keep mechanisms in the role of servant rather than in the role of master. Wherever you see in our modern cities, programs of welfare, of neighborliness, of beautification, wherever you see a conscious striving to soften the rigid procedure of system with a touch of humanness, you can find at the center the carrying out of a college dream. Here and there in our colleges you find enrolled the names of sons who died on battlefields for country and honor. But in the thought life of these colleges, in the memory of teachers and students, there are also written the names of college men and women who served the true, the undying America, who

strove to maintain her spiritual being by being friends and servants of their fellows. This social order of the true America lives and will live so long as our colleges keep the faith with their ideals.

The college in America has rendered an honorable service in the field of religious idealism. An immediate proof of this fact is seen in the recurrent complaint on the part of fathers and mothers that colleges take away the students' religion. They cannot do that and be true to the liberal arts ideal of education for, in the sense in which we use that term, while there may be many religious people who are not very well educated, there are no truly educated people who are not religious. Religion in the colleges has always been one of the dynamic reasons for being. It has been at the very heart—it is the secret of the intellectual integrity of the colleges. The term religion means tied-in-ness, or to use a modern word—organization. The religious man is the integrated, the unified personality. College life, subjecting its people to the presence of high quality, genuineness, thoroughness, scars its students with the scar of personal discontent, with a thirst, a hunger which can never be fully satisfied. The colleges never take away a man's or a woman's religion—they make them more restless in a quest for life that is life indeed.

But it is perfectly true that colleges often effect profound changes in the field of religious thought, ideas. If a college sent my son or daughter back to me untouched in this field, I would have a perfect right to feel that I had not gotten my money's worth. For the organization of personality is not an insulated procedure—it occurs in time and place. The student in a modern college finds himself in a vaster universe than that in which the religious concepts of a previous day were formed. His thought of God must take in larger territory than the thought of an earlier day took in. If he is to form a religious faith which will carry him with purpose through the problems of a more complex and difficult world he must change many of his earlier religious ideas. Not because he must lose but because he must gain the religion by which he is to live.

In the sense that we are a Christian people we must recall that Jesus mediated a faith in love as being a faith in God. I doubt whether any church has remained any more faithful

to this idea than have the colleges. For when the intellectual challenge of a changing world is lost sight of we tend to perpetuate beyond its period of usefulness the crystalization of religious truth. This the colleges rightfully challenge. So it comes to pass that youth, trained to think in terms of the age in which they live, are asked to subscribe to credal statements which in a modern world are no longer true. Why, I doubt whether Jesus himself would be able honestly to accept some of the statements about Him which well-meaning but unintelligent people lay down as requisite to discipleship.

The colleges insist that what Jesus said about God was true, that those who really believe in God do so by believing in love and good will as the way to life. So on the campuses of America the call to human friendliness has rung with undimining clarity. Here on the campuses youth has had laid upon him to be a servant, a helper, a friend. If we of an older day find some of our thought forms of religion discredited it is because in this, the will to love, we have been atheists.

The colleges of America today believe that unselfishness works, that goodwill is practicable, that modern industry can be Christian, that men are motivated by other than monetary standards. They believe that war is the great atheism, that modern civilization can live most notably without war, that patriotism is something bigger than the readiness to kill other nationals. They believe that poverty isn't necessary, that it is the will of God that it is possible for all men to enjoy the world, to share its fruits, to live the good life. They believe that politics can be high grade, that it is possible for every town and city to be a beautiful home for the human spirit, nurturing its children in the ways of love. And because the colleges believe this the cause of true religion is served, and modern America ignores them at her peril.

A third field in which the college is doing an important work is in the field of community awareness. This is a work which has seldom been recognized, but it explains why America elings so instinctively to its colleges. It is in this field that the college realizes its function as a cultural institution. The cultured man combines within himself an awareness of man's mental and spiritual achievement in history; he shares with many parts man's recognition of enduring forms of inner ex-

pression, in painting, sculpture, in the crafts, in architecture, in music, and in literature. But this is only one half of culture, for he realizes that these achievements occurred in time and place, that, in this sense, all great art is provincial. So all great colleges are provincial, designed to minister to given constituencies. Culture may be defined as the entry of your life and mine into a community of minds which have arrived at a common awareness of things that matter and which find these values requisite for fulness of life. But such sharing must be localized or it amounts to a mere dilettantism. Now it is as an instrument of cultural provincializing of universal values, that the colleges have always done a great work. Today they are foci of community awareness, and as such they help a young nation, nurtured through its colonial beginnings in the spiritual heritage of a foreign land, to become aware of itself. This job has not been done as well as it might have been done. There are still too many colleges which regard English literature as more important for study than American literature. As a people we are still too timid with regard to the hope of a great American culture. Many Americans read Rolvag's "Growth of the Soil" because they thought it a Norwegian book,—it was, but they were astounded to learn that it was written on the campus of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota. Dvorak's "Humoresque" doesn't sound nearly so convincing after we discover that it was written in Iowa. In Wisconsin many people lose respect for Hiawatha when they discover that she was a Chippewa Indian maiden and so lived too near home! There are dozens of colleges which teach Spanish either in the hope of fitting students for a commercial career in those parts of South America which speak Spanish or of acquainting students with the literature of Spain, yet which show little interest in using the Spanish department as a means of interpreting the Spanish influence in the making of an American civilization. Yet despite our failures as colleges we still represent the one great body of Americans who can unite the universal and the provincial in culture. This means that it is the college men and women who are helping communities to enter into themselves, to proceed to a localized cultural life. The college graduates do not find it difficult to make a good life wherever they live.

And as I think of my own Beloit College I feel proudest of those sons and daughters of Beloit who went back to the towns from which they came to college, and who have helped open the eyes of their fellow townsmen to the riches so near at hand. What I am talking about is far removed from the provincial braggartism which characterized the local boosters' pride. My community awareness is tinged with the humility which always follows from a study of world history. It is that knowledge of local spiritual wealth in nature, in social background, in pioneer beginnings which will produce literature that becomes a part of a national culture. Nowhere is this more successfully accomplished than on the campus of our American colleges. If it will be possible for each of our forty-eight states to create for itself a literature, an art, a daring originality in political and social experimentation it will be because the colleges are savingly provincial in their culture. It will be because Sweet Briar is proud of being a Virginia college, because Beloit is proud of being a Wisconsin college. It is because we are not all going to talk or think or act alike, because in each region people are taught to find the good life where they are, that I am optimistic as to the wealth of an American civilization.

To summarize: I have suggested that this college with all great American colleges has justified the joyous faith of its founders. By reserving the right to challenge the forces of modern life in the interests of common humanity, by asserting faith in the American spirit of individualism, and by holding loyally to a democratic spirit it has assisted in the development of a better social order. True to its task of promoting intellectual honesty and of interpreting religion in terms of an actual world as it exists today, it has maintained the truth that lies in Jesus' idea of God as love, and has remained in the best sense religious. Striving to illuminate the rich background of man's spiritual achievements it has endeavored to place the cultural perspective at the disposal of the people in their respective localized situations. Realizing all this, shall we not take grateful pride in our college inheritance and face the ills of the present hour serenely and with courage?

THE ALGERNON SYDNEY SULLIVAN AWARD

The Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award, established by the Southern Society of New York in honor of the first president of the society, was conferred upon Mr. Robert L. Cumnock, of Altavista, Virginia, by Sweet Briar College on this occasion. In announcing the award Dr. Meta Glass, president of Sweet Briar, said:

"Last spring Sweet Briar College was invited by the New York Southern Society to become one of the fifteen southern colleges that might confer the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award, established in honor of the first president of the Society, and this highly appreciated honor was accepted by the Board of Overseers.

"The New York Southern Society established this award because it was 'desirous of perpetuating the memory of Algernon Sydney Sullivan's life in such form as shall be most expressive of his character, and shall so far as is possible recognize and encourage in others those same principles of love for and service to men, which were his dominant characteristics.'

"The Award may be made annually to one senior and one person not of the student body. 'The Non-Student Award recognizes accomplishment, but disinterested service is the fundamental principle of both as it was the keynote of the life of Algernon Sydney Sullivan, whose name it bears. He reached out both hands in constant helpfulness to his fellow-men, and he and his way of living became an inspirational force in the lives of those about him; it won for him the enduring love, respect, and admiration of all those who knew him.'

"By means of the Award Rollins College has delighted to honor Irving Bacheller, the College of William and Mary to honor Dr. James H. Dillard, the University of Virginia to honor the Reverend Noble C. Powell and Dr. Beverley D. Tucker, Jr.; the George Peabody College for Teachers to honor Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes.

"On the occasion when Sweet Briar for the first time confers this Award it is our joyous privilege to give it to Robert L. Cumnock whom, Madame Chairman, I present to you."

Mrs. Charles R. Burnett, of Richmond, Virginia, alumna member of the Board of Overseers, acknowledged the presentation on behalf of the Board and conferred the Award, saying:

"Robert L. Cumnock,—member of the Board of Directors and of the Board of Overseers of Sweet Briar College and long Chairman of both Executive Committees,—for your abundant and unselfish service, for your high ideals, for your wise counsels, for your unfailing gentleness and courtesy, for your affectionate interest in persons and causes, for what you have done for Sweet Briar College and Sweet Briar people, because of the quality of the man you are, Sweet Briar College confers upon you its Algernon Sydney Sullivan Medallion with the hope that the affectionate appreciation it betokens will be to you a source of satisfaction and to others an inspiration."

FOUNDERS' DAY HONORS

Announcement of Founders' Day Honors was made by Dean Emily H. Dutton at the exercises on October 28. Founders' Day Honors constitute the highest scholastic award made at Sweet Briar, and are given only to those Juniors and Seniors who rank highest in scholarship, taking into consideration their entire course previous to the opening of the Junior and Senior year respectively.

Those Seniors who were awarded honors on Founders' Day were:

Helen Goodyear Bond.....	Holly Oak, Delaware
Mary Greenwood Imbrie.....	Woodbury, New Jersey
Abigail Shepard.....	Cincinnati, Ohio
Hetty Wells.....	Rockville Centre, Long Island

The Juniors receiving Founders' Day Honors were:

Eleanor Alcott	Cleveland, Ohio
Connie Burwell.....	Charlotte, North Carolina
Julia L. Daugherty	Frankfort, Indiana
Charlotte Lee	Wusih, China
Catherine Marshall	Halifax, Virginia
Sara L. Merritt.....	Huntsville, Alabama
Marcia E. Morrison.....	Indianapolis, Indiana
Marjorie L. Smith.....	Norfolk, Virginia

Dean Dutton also announced the award of the Manson Memorial Alumnae Scholarship, a scholarship given to the college by the Sweet Briar Alumnae Association and awarded each year to a member of the Senior or Junior classes not only upon the basis of scholastic distinction, but also taking into consideration achievement in student activities and all-round qualities representative of the best traditions of the college. Abigail Shepard, who also was awarded Founders' Day Honors, was the recipient of the Manson Memorial Scholarship for the year 1932-1933.

THE UNVEILING OF THE DAISY WILLIAMS MEDALLION

The exercises in the chapel were followed immediately, as the audience moved to Monument Hill for the annual ceremony at the Williams' burying ground, by a ceremony in the Daisy Williams Gymnasium, where a bronze medallion of Daisy, the child in whose memory Sweet Briar was founded, was unveiled. President Glass presided at the ceremony and gave a brief account of the finding of the medallion, the origin and date of which are unknown but which was discovered last summer packed away in a closet in the oldest of the dormitory buildings, where it had presumably been put during the early days of the college. It was removed from the Victorian red plush in which it was framed and presented to the Daisy Williams Gymnasium on this occasion. Mrs. John Clark Wood, of New York City, president of the Sweet Briar Alumnae Association, unveiled the medallion.

In concluding the ceremony President Glass read a portion of the address delivered at the laying of the cornerstone of the Gymnasium in June 1930, including a short resume of the life of Daisy Williams:

"Of Daisy Williams we know that she was born in Sweet Briar House on September 10, 1867, and that she died in New York City on January 22, 1884. Within that brief compass was lived a normal, pleasant little life untouched by large events or dramatic happenings, but rich in the all-important personal interests and associations which so satisfactorily fill the horizon of the very young. From the house she lived in and the garden she played in, from her toys and her books and her harp, from the lace of her christening robe and her dresses and hats, from her funny little trunk filled with the odds and ends of once important possessions, from her diary and letters and all the miscellany of her small belongings which have been preserved as part of the heritage of Sweet Briar, from all these things we may easily reconstruct the details of her sixteen years of life.

"From Daisy's pictures we know that as a baby she was a chubby, curly-haired little person, blue-eyed and vastly solemn,

and that as she grew older she became less chubby and somewhat less curly-haired, but equally blue-eyed and serious. We know that she was surrounded by affection, and because of her and whatever association it was that gave her the name, daisies became symbols of affection and sentiment in the Williams household. We know that she lived the life of the rich planter children of Virginia, and if, in her case, it was rather a lonely life, having no brothers or sisters, and neither relatives of her generation or the children of close neighbors to play with, she was apparently unconscious of any lack in that direction. We know that she was interested in all the happenings of the big plantation and in the families of the servants and tenant farmers, that she had her own horse and rode constantly, that she raised chickens and had her own garden to play in and probably to experiment with, for she knew all about the planting and growing of flowers and vegetables. We know that she had toys, and such expensive novelties as the little tinkling music-box, with eight selections in its repertoire, which stands in Sweet Briar parlor now and which must have been a great affair in its day. We know that she was taught to play the harp, as her mother had been, and that as she grew older the family went to New York for at least part of each winter so that she might attend the proper kind of school at which the daughters of the well-to-do were taught what they should know; and that during those New York winters she led a properly metropolitan life, in a quiet way,—going to the theatre and to concerts, occasionally dining in restaurants, calling on and dining with her father's relatives in the city, going to church at St. Thomas', shopping on Fifth Avenue. And we know that it was during their annual stay in New York in the winter of 1883 that Daisy was taken ill of pneumonia and died, that her body was brought back to Sweet Briar by her parents and laid to rest in the family burying ground high on its hill to the south, and marked by the little white marble angel that was brought all the way from Italy. A simple story and a simple life, distinguished from that of hundreds of children of her generation and class only by the tragedy of her death and the imagination of her parents, who must have looked forward to a day such as this when the name and the legend of Daisy Williams should be given an enduring place in the life of the community they created."

